

FRESH FIND

Check out www.julietterossant.com, the Web magazine of "Super Chef" author Juliette Rossant. She has features on chefs with multiple restaurants in multiple cities, and also highlights several local restaurants and Chesapeake cuisine.



AROUND TOWN

Morton's The Steakhouse in Tysons Corner and Tiffany & Co. have teamed together to help men create The Ultimate Proposal, a \$10,000 chocolate cake dessert featuring Morton's Legendary Hot Chocolate Cake topped with a brilliant diamond engagement ring from Tiffany. Though the price tag may seem high, it is just an estimate as you have consultations with both the Morton's and Tiffany's team to customize the ring and cake. To make arrangements for The Ultimate Proposal, contact Maura Delaney at 703-883-0800. An appointment will be scheduled with Tiffany, located in the same building.

Q&A WITH A LOCAL CHEF



Andrew Harnik/Examiner

Oceanaire chef educates, creates inspiring dishes

By Alexandra Greeley
Special to The Examiner

Hooked on fish, Baltimore native and executive chef Rob Klink of The Oceanaire Seafood Room has become something of a seafood activist, showcasing sustainable choices on his restaurant menu. Inspired by Smithsonian sustainable seafood cookbook author Carole Baldwin, who wrote "One Fish, Two Fish, Crawfish, Bluefish: The Smithsonian Sustainable Seafood Cookbook" in 2003, Klink now educates staff about how to protect our deep-sea environs.

"The more I read and learn," he says, "I start to realize if you don't do something quickly, there won't be anything left. There is not the seafood abundance we once thought there was.

"To sustain life itself, you can't just take anything you want. ... I won't serve any fish that has been illegally caught." Klink notes that he buys the seafood for the restaurant, and develops recipes around what is available ... and sustainable.

Pondering why the seafood issue resonates with him, Klink points out he grew up in a seafood town, enjoying its riches of crabs, oysters and rockfish since childhood. Even one of his earliest restaurant duties in Baltimore was steaming crabs.

» Please visit examiner.com for one of chef Rob Klink's deliciously creative recipes — Wild Chesapeake Rockfish.

Years later, he has found that cooking seafood presents a culinary challenge. "There is more and there is less than you can do with seafood than you can with meat," he says.

But he has perfected a meat-fish dish offered on the Oceanaire menu: osso bucco with monkfish.

"You must just work with fish. You learn what works best with certain varieties," he says.

By emphasizing sustainable seafood, Klink further expects patrons to become aware of the fragility of our oceans and waterways.

"Some patrons care," he says, "though some wonder why there is no halibut currently on the menu. ... We took sea bass [a threatened species] off the menu years ago, and people yelled. We now use sable instead." Or, when available, Klink will purchase MSC sea bass — that is, sea bass certified by the Marine Stewardship Council.

While certain farm-raised species produce a pleasing dish — farm-raised salmon is fine, he says — Klink adds that wild-caught fish does offer a different flavor profile. Yet, Klink notes reality is forcing cooks to become stewards of the sea. "Take the Chesapeake Bay," he says. "Two hundred years ago, it contained an abundance of shad and sturgeon. Now, there is no more sturgeon on the East Coast."

IN KLINK'S OWN WORDS



WHAT IS YOUR COMFORT FOOD? I would never turn down a good cheeseburger. Then, it would probably be either a beef stew or boiled chicken with vegetables.

WHAT IS YOUR COOKING PHILOSOPHY? Keep things simple. If you buy the best ingredients possible, as here, the best fish, and complement the flavors, then that's success. If you start with the best ingredients, that's half the battle. Then these need to be well seasoned, but not overly so. It just comes down to the ingredients and what you want in the end.

WHICH TOOLS ARE ESSENTIALS? A good stovetop pan, a spoon for tasting and tongs. And a towel.

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS? Salt, pepper, good olive oil and a good balsamic vinegar. And garlic. I can cook a lot right there.

WHAT'S IN YOUR FRIDGE RIGHT NOW? Organic milk, butter, oranges, carrots, broccoli, goat cheese, sausage. I haven't been home to cook recently.

DO YOU COOK MUCH AT HOME? Occasionally. I'm here five nights a week, so one day a week my wife and I go out; one night I cook at home. My daughter loves salmon, rockfish and soft shell crabs [when they are] in season. These are simply grilled.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION? From books, colleagues, travels. I have some good sous chefs, and we toss around ideas and try them out. Lots of trial and error.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR LEISURE TIME? I ride bikes and go to the gym. That's what keeps me going all week.

UPDATED OFFERINGS



» A new executive chef has joined the ranks at **Beacon Bar and Grill** (1615 Rhode Island Ave. NW; 202-872-1126). CIA graduate **Troy Walker** has moved across the circle from his previous gig at **15 Ria**, bringing a brand new menu is terrific comfort foods perfect for the winter season.

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ...

» Landing in Lansdowne Town Center in Loudoun County in spring 2007 is Boston-based **Not Your Average Joe's** (www.notyouraveragejoes.com). It's worth the drive if you're hungry for creative casual cuisine. Check back in coming weeks for more information, including more about the other two locations coming to Northern Virginia by the end of 2007.

» Also in up-and-coming Loudoun County, **Clyde's Restaurant Group** has opened its 14th locale called **Clyde's Willow Creek Farm** (42920 Broadlands Blvd., Broadlands; 571-209-1200; www.clydes.com). Trying to give it an American Inn feel with farm and equestrian remnants throughout, the restaurant serves many of Clyde's signature dishes and seats more than 625 in nine rooms.

» **M'dawg Haute Dogs** is opening as a new late-night eatery in Adams Morgan (2418 18th St. NW). But don't worry, they aren't trying to compete with the ever-popular **Amsterdam Falafel** shop, they are owned by the same people. **Scott and Ariane Bennett** have teamed with chef **Greggory Hill** of famed **David*Greggory** restaurant to offer up premiums hot dogs, Italian sausages, bratwursts and ostrich dogs, as well as veggie dogs for non-meat eaters. M'dawg (pronounced meh-dog) will be opening for breakfast, lunch, dinner and on the weekends, will remain open for snacking until 4 a.m.

